

Liberal Party (Sask.)
#52

Scott
Papers

NOT AN ISSUE OF SCHOOLS BUT OF VERACITY.

**False Statements Made as to the Kind of Separate
Schools Guaranteed by the Saskatch-
ewan Act.**

LET ELECTORS READ FOR THEMSELVES.

Electors are told by Provincial Rights canvassers and organs (including the Regina Standard) that The Saskatchewan Act gives to the minorities a right and title to restore church control of separate schools. The statement is rankly false. The Saskatchewan Act preserves to the minorities just what they possessed under Chapters 29 and 30 of the N.W.T. Ordinances. The Standard knows that church control was not permitted by the Ordinances, and knows that the right to church control is not conferred by the Autonomy Act. The Saskatchewan Legislature or Government is free to allow church control, but Premier Scott in behalf of his Government gives the pledge that they will maintain absolute public control over the separate and public schools alike, as the Province has power to do under the Saskatchewan Act.

Let electors look into Section 17 of the Act and into the School Ordinances for themselves. Section 17, everybody now knows, continues the minorities in all the rights they were enjoying under the Ordinances and nothing more. What were these rights? The following clause from Chapter 29 of 1901 contains the whole right and privilege:

41. The minority of the ratepayers in any district whether Protestant or Roman Catholic may establish a separate school therein; and in such case the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to assessments of such rates as they impose upon themselves in respect thereof.

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That Section 41 embodies the sum total of the "right and privilege." And Section 41 does not stand alone. Where rests the right of control? Section 4 of the same Ordinance is specific. It is as follows:

4. The department shall have the control and management of all kindergarten schools, public and SEPARATE schools, normal schools, teachers' institutes and the education of deaf, deaf mute and blind persons.

The "department" is the Department of Education, whose head must be a member of the Government, subject to the will of the people through the Legislature, that is to say a responsible Minister. Then there are Sections 45 and 149 as follows:

45. After the establishment of a separate school district under the provisions of this Ordinance such separate school district and the board thereof shall possess and exercise all rights, powers, privileges and BE SUBJECT TO THE SAME LIABILITIES AND METHOD OF GOVERNMENT as is herein provided in respect of public school districts.

149. No person shall be engaged, appointed, employed or retained as teacher in any school unless he holds a valid certificate of qualification issued under the regulations of the department.

Section 45 is plain to every man who can understand English. Section 149 applies to separate and public schools alike. Who controls, a church or the Government? Sections 4 and 149 contain the plain answer.

The Religious Instruction privilege is not a special privilege in separate schools, but is possessed by every school district, separate and public, in the Province. The following are the clauses covering this feature:

137. No religious instruction except as hereinafter provided shall be permitted in the school of any district from the opening of such school until one half hour previous to its closing in the afternoon after which time any such instruction permitted or desired by the board may be given.

138. It shall however be permissible for the board of any district to direct that the school be opened by the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

138. Any child shall have the privilege of leaving the school room at the time at which religious instruction is commenced as provided for in the next preceding section or of remaining without taking part in any religious instruction that may be given if the parents or guardians so desire.

139. No teacher, school trustee or inspector shall in any way attempt to deprive such child of any advantage that it might derive from the ordinary education given in such school and any such action on the part of any school trustee, inspector or teacher shall be held to be a disqualification for and voidance of the office held by him.

No compulsion, no coercion. Secular education from 9 to 3.30 o'clock, controlled and managed by the state; religious instruction after 3.30 o'clock within the absolute power of the parents. Church and state completely divorced. No better system of national schools has been devised. It is a national system with a safety-valve which leaves no invitation for the parochial (private) school and purely church control in which more than 1,000,000 children in the United States are being educated.

The person who can read Chapters 29 and 30 of the School Ordinances and still contend that the Saskatchewan Act does not give this Province absolute power to manage and control our separate schools, is either a knave or a fool; in either case he is a false guide.

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The Liberals stand as they stood in 1896 for maintenance of the principle of public control of every school aided by public funds. This principle is safeguarded by Section 17 of the Autonomy Act. The anti-Liberals want to kill Section 17 and have Section 93 B.N.A. Act apply word for word, which would grant to minorities all the rights and privileges which they were entitled to "by law in the province at the union," and which might and likely would result to throw our separate schools back where they were prior to the adoption of the present Ordinances, under church control. The policy of the anti-Liberals is to endanger the principle of state control of all schools.

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